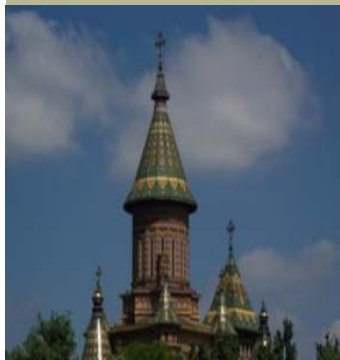




American Citizen Services eNewsletter

March 2012



BE AN EDUCATED VOTER

- Check out the [FVAP links page](#) for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues you care about. Non-partisan information about candidates, their voting records, and their positions on issues is widely available and easy to obtain via numerous websites such as [Project Smart Voter](#).
- You can also read national and hometown newspapers on-line or search the Internet to locate articles and information.
- For information about election dates and deadlines, subscribe to [FVAP's Voting Alerts](#). FVAP also shares Voting Alerts via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Check out the [FVAP links page](#) for helpful resources that will aid your research of candidates and issues you care about.
- Remember, voting for candidates for federal offices does not affect your federal or state tax liability. Voting for candidates for state or local offices could affect your state tax liability. Consult legal counsel if you have questions.
- Many states now have websites where you can verify your registration. If you are unsure of your voter registration status, or want to confirm that local officials have received and approved your registration, check the FVAP website for a [directory of available state voter registration verification websites](#). You can also call or write your [local election officials](#) directly.



Visit [Embassy's website](#) for more information about voting or write at ACSBucharest@state.gov if you have any questions.



Smart
Traveler
Enrollment
Program

All non-emergency ACS services (renewal of U.S. passports, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad, notariats, etc.) are provided by appointment **ONLY**.

Please follow [this link](#) to make an appointment with our staff.

AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES

Address: 4-6 Dr. Liviu Librescu Blvd.

E-mail: acsbucharest@state.gov

Tel: +40-21-270 6000

Fax: +40-21-200-3578

In the event of an emergency involving an American citizen, please, call +40-21-200-3433

For information about public hours, please visit <http://romania.usembassy.gov/acs/index.html>.





April 15 of each year is the due date for filing your Federal individual income tax return if your tax year ends December 31st. Your return is considered filed timely if the envelope is properly addressed and post-marked no later than April 15. If you use a fiscal year (which is a year ending on the last day of any month other than December), your return is due on or before the 15th day of the fourth month after the close of your fiscal year. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the due date is delayed until the next business day (i.e., Tax Year 2010 was due April 18, 2011).

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien, the rules for filing income, estate, and gift tax returns and paying estimated tax are generally the same whether you are in the United States or abroad. Your worldwide income is subject to U.S. income tax, regardless of where you reside.

If you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien residing overseas, or are in the military on duty outside the U.S., on the regular due date of your return, you are allowed an [automatic 2-month extension](#) to file your return and pay any amount due without requesting an extension. For a calendar year return, the automatic 2-month extension is to June 15.

If you are unable to file your return by the automatic 2-month extension date, you can request an additional extension to October 15 by filing [Form 4868](#), [Application for Automatic Extension of Time To File U.S. Individual Income Tax Return](#) before the automatic 2-month extension date. However, any tax due payments made after June 15 will be subject to both interest charges and failure to pay penalties. For more information, refer to the Form 4868 Instructions.

Please note that the IRS is no longer publishing the Overseas Filing Package. Tax forms can be downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.irs.gov/formspubs/index.html>, ordered [online](#), or obtained through *American Citizen Services* at your local Embassy or Consulate, or by calling the IRS at 001 800 829 3676.

Once taxpayers file their federal return, they can track the status of their refunds by using the “[Where's My Refund?](#)” tool, which taxpayers can get to using the IRS2Go phone app or from the front page of www.irs.gov. By providing their Taxpayer Identification Numbers, filing status, and the exact whole dollar amount of their anticipated refund taxpayers can generally get information about their refund 72 hours after the IRS acknowledges receipt of their e-filed returns, or three to four weeks after mailing a paper return.

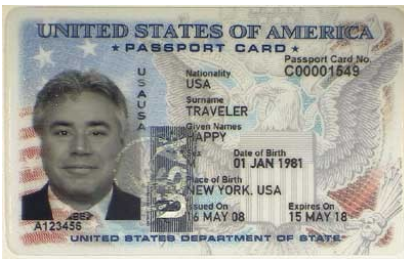
*Visit the [IRS website](#) for useful information, including *When, Where and How to File for Americans and Alien Residents living overseas.**



IT'S FAST. IT'S SAFE. IT'S FREE.



APPLYING FOR A PASSPORT BOOK? APPLY FOR A PASSPORT CARD AS WELL!



You may know that on July 14, 2008, the Department of State began production of the ***U.S. Passport Card***.

The passport card is the wallet-size travel document that can only be used to re-enter the United States at ***land border-crossings and sea ports-of-entry*** from Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. The card provides a less expensive, smaller, and convenient alternative to the passport book for those who travel frequently to these destinations by land or by sea.

When outside the United States and the above mentioned countries, the passport card can be used as a ***valid citizenship identification***, though it is not valid for travel internationally (for example traveling from Germany to Switzerland/Austria/France/etc.)

The passport card is as secure as current technology permits. Laser engraving and state-of-the-art security features minimize the possibility of counterfeiting and forgery. The card is issued with a protective sleeve that prevents the card from being read when not in use. To increase speed, efficiency, and security at U.S. land and sea border crossings, the passport card contains a vicinity-read radio frequency identification (RFID) chip. *There is no personal information written to the RFID chip.* This chip simply points to a stored record in secure government databases.

A previous passport book holder, eligible to use [Form DS-82](#), may apply for a passport card as a [Renewal](#). [First time applicants](#) for a U.S. Passport, and those not eligible to use the [DS-82](#), should apply for a passport card using [Form DS-11](#).

The average processing time for a Passport Card is between 4 and 6 weeks.

In addition, you may know that the U.S. Department of State is currently conducting a limited pilot program allowing U.S. citizens to apply online for a U.S. passport card. To be eligible for the pilot, you must:

- Be 16 years of age or older
- Have a valid, 10 year U.S. passport book
- Have at least 12 months of validity remaining on your passport book before expiration
- **Have a U.S. or Canadian mailing address**
- Have an e-mail address

Please note that U.S. Citizens residing outside the U.S. and Canada are not eligible to apply online.

More information about the pilot is available at the following website

http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/ppt_card/ppt_card_5648.html, as well as at [FAQs](#).

If you are interested in how to apply for the passport card at the Embassy in Bucharest, please visit our website at <http://romania.usembassy.gov/acs/passportcard.html>.



We continue to encourage all U.S. citizens to *register their trips and residence abroad* to facilitate our communications with them in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions about the *Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)*, please, email us at ACSBcharest@state.gov.

The Embassy will be closed on April 16, May 1, May 28, June 4, July 4, August 15, September 3, October 8, November 12, November 22, December 25 and December 26 in observance of U.S. and Romanian official holidays and for administrative reasons.

STAY CONNECTED



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: *Can the U.S. Embassy help me with my U.S. taxes?*

No. Regrettably, we cannot help you with your taxes. **There is no IRS office or IRS representative at the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest.** Our consular staff cannot provide answers to specific questions about your income taxes.

For immediate assistance from a taxpayer specialist, you can call, fax or email the **International Customer Service Site** located in Philadelphia. The Service Site is open Monday through Friday, for 17 hours each day, from 6:00 AM to 11 PM, Eastern Time.

In addition, there is an Internal Revenue Service office serving U.S. taxpayers living or working in Romania located in Frankfurt, Germany. The office provides U.S. federal tax assistance to Americans in Romania. There is no IRS office at the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest, nor does the Embassy in Bucharest have the ability to provide answers to specific questions about income taxes.

The customer service representatives in the U.S. can be contacted as follows:

Tel: 001 215 516 2000

Fax: 001 215 516 2555

E-mail inquiries: <http://www.irs.gov/help/page/0..id=133197.00.html>.

Inquiries regarding **taxpayer identification numbers** should be made to

Tel: 001 215 516 4846

Fax: 001 215 516 3271

Please note that all inquiries must be in the English.

